Lightning Crashes by Fatebegins

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Language: English
Relationships: Derek Hale/Stiles Stilinski, Peter Hale/Scott McCall
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Lightning Crashes

Author's Note:

Hello All, sorry about the mix up before, but this is part of the ETA series, i forgot to tag it as such!

Stiles

Shock holds Stiles immobile as he watches his husband, *the father of his children*, being led away in handcuffs like a criminal. Stiles knows Derek, and he knows that it's pride that keeps his eyes fixed straight ahead and expression completely blank.

When the arresting officer pushes Derek forward over the threshold, his boot gets caught on the wooden stop and he stumbles. Stiles makes a small sound in his throat, reaching out to help him before he realizes that there is absolutely nothing he can do.

They're both completely helpless.

It's too much like that day; when his father had been arrested as the entire town looked on, many faces lax with shock, other's alive with righteous rage. When he left home, Stiles had been so sure that he was escaping all of that.

This can't be reality.

All Stiles can think about are the white packages bound with duck tape, the powder that spilled across the hard wood floor.

Drugs.

Cocaine in the floor boards.

Derek wouldn't.

He *wouldn't.*

Stiles keeps repeating those two words, keeps telling himself that over and over, trying to ingrain it into every fiber of his being. He loves Derek and that love means that he trusts him. If Derek had said he was done; done dealing, done enforcing, then he was. His promises weren‘t given lightly, and he’d promised him that he was finished with that life, numerous times. So, Stiles doesn’t know how those drugs had gotten into their home but he can be sure that it wasn’t by Derek‘s hand.

“Don’t worry.” Peter says next to him and Stiles has the insane urge to laugh. Peter is extremely calm, looks nearly bored. “I’m going to figure this shit out.”

Unable to respond, Stiles moves away from him and to the window. Through the screen he can see the gathering crowd far below, the sirens and large black vans marked FBI had drawn a lot of attention. Derek’s being put into the back of a squad car, flanked by two back Escalades.

“Fuckin A.” One of Peter’s men mutters and Stiles gaze is pulled back to the destroyed condo.

The living room is filled with debris. Derek’s prized white leather couch--the one not even Dylan was allowed to eat on-- has been cut open, stuffing spilling out unto the mud soiled carpet.

The officers had run rampant, nothing has been left unturned; books litter the floor, the recently packed boxes are up ended, contents kicked with booted feet and sprawled across the room. They haven’t shown a care for their belongings, continuing to tear things apart even when Sabrina began to cry from the noise and Robin viciously barked. Both had to be taken outside by Liam.

The older agent, the one who’d placed the cuffs on Derek is still there, yelling orders as people run back and forth. Stiles winces when he hears several more crashes coming from the bedroom. He can just picture Derek’s model airplanes being swept to the ground.

“This is the scene of an ongoing investigation.” The agent snarls at them, unsnapping the side of his bullet proof vest. “Everyone needs to clear out. Now.”

Stiles feels like he got slapped in the face, “You c-can’t--”

“I can do whatever the hell I please,” The man takes a step forward, hand on his holster. “Or would you like to join that scum you call your husband in a holding cell?”

“Agent Connors, it‘s been quite awhile, hasn‘t it?” Peter moves between them, his four men following. “I see you haven’t lost your sunny disposition.”

“And you haven’t lost your guard dogs.”

“These men are here for my protection.” The smile that spreads across Peter’s face makes Stiles’ stomach turn. “I would hate for anything untoward to trespass.”

Agent Connors looks behind him, from the cops to Peter. “You really think you can threaten me in a room full of agents?”

“I‘m not an imbecile. I know that threatening a federal agent-- especially a decorated, family man --would get me in a lot of trouble. Which reminds me… how are little Janie and Thomas? Tom must be what, now? Ten, eleven? Still kicking the soccer ball around at Arlington Park--”

“You son of a bitch.” Another officer growls, “We’ll have you brought in on--”

“What do you want?” Connors interrupts, hand held up in silence when his team tries to intervene. “And make it quick.”

This is Peter in his element and it makes Stiles’ stomach turn.

“I’m merely requesting twenty minutes to gather belongings; the child’s clothing, toys and the like.”

“Everything is evidence.” Agent Connors reiterates, but his voice holds none of the finality it did before. “We have to--”

“You can look through it all on the way out.” Peter motions three of the silent five to Dylan’s room. “Get his essentials, and playthings; he favors the tricycle and green frog.” He turns to Stiles, “Anything else you can think of?”

Numb, Stiles shakes head, his mind has gone completely blank.

“Stay calm.” Peter‘s voice drops when Agent Connors walks back to his unit. “You have to remain calm, it’s what Derek needs right now.”

“Why?” Unlike him, Dylan’s feelings are right on the surface, blue eyes wet with tears. He’s finally decided to start asking questions, his apparent shock gone. He address the room at large, nearly screaming. “Where did you take my Daddy?”

Most of the remaining agents look uncomfortable, but Stiles doesn’t miss the smirk on Agent Connors’ face before he gives them his back.

“He’s going on an adventure.” Scott replies when no one else does. The false cheer rings like nails on a chalkboard, Scott’s expression is even worse. It’s so forced, the smile so brittle, it looks painful. “He’ll be back once he completes the challenges.”

Dylan looks up at him dubiously, “C-challenges?”

“Yeah,” Scott nods, picking him up in a hug. “You remember when Dora does on missions, and has to travel through the forest, over the pond and through the barn to get to her grandma’s house?”

“Daddy went with Dora?” Dylan sniffs, rubbing his wet face on Scott’s shoulder. He reminds Stiles of a lost puppy. He feels the same way. “He’ll be back tomorrow?”

“Probably not, Dyl.” Scott‘s smile sadly, “Your Dad is on a longer adventure… but Uncle Peter and I will be here with your Poppy to take care of you.”

That’s all it takes.

Ignoring Peter and Scot’s calls, Stiles flees into the guest bathroom and locks the door behind him before crumpling to the cold tile floor.

Derek

Frustration is an easy thing to decipher in another. The body betrays us all, gives away things that are meant to be hidden. Years on the street have taught him not

only to train his body to hide every emotion but also to hone the skill of reading others.

Derek knows the signs of frustration, the white knuckle grip, the slight tremor of the upper lip and the monotone tap of booted feet beneath the metal table. He also knows the pain of being handcuffed for hours, muscles pulled tight as he steadily looks back into the face of some nameless agent. He knows that everything in the room , from the bright white lights to the single metal chair are meant to disconcert him.

This isn't the local brass, these are the big guys; DEA and FBI. Derek's never tangled with them before, and after he'd retired he'd never expected to. After all they've expended on getting an arrest, he knows that they won't let him go easily.

"You know, you're only fucking yourself over," Good cop is back in the game, he's around forty and has calculated 'kind' blue eyes. "Every body out there wants to nail you to the wall and get bonuses out of this, but I wouldn't mind getting a plea. You win, we win."

Good cop had offered to take off the hand cuffs but Derek had declined. That 'no' had been the only word he'd spoken besides, 'I want to call my lawyer'. They shouldn't bother with their shit coffee and fake promises, he's not going to say a word.

"Look, I know that you think there's no value in talking, that your uncle will get you out of this, but he can't, and I'm being honest with you here. Federal agents retrieved more that ten kilograms of pure cocaine from your home."

Thirty more minutes of the fake understanding and Derek reaches his limit. He can't hold in the laughter any longer, "Is this the best the State can do? Send Homer Simpson to get me to crack?"

For a moment the mask slips, the fury and disgust in Good Cops eyes on full display.

Derek's smile only grows when the door opens and Evelyn Camillo strides in, expensive heels ringing loudly on the tile floor. He's seen her before, anther woman who's greedy enough to get involved with Peter but smart enough to be

useful. She'd spearheaded Liam's appeal; will likely have to do the same for him.

Good Cop rises, ready to keep her out. "This is an--"

"I demand to speak with my client."

Stiles

The house is silent and empty when Stiles unlocks the front door for the first time since they'd done the final walk through. Ever since Derek had brought them here with the realtor, Stiles had imagined moving into their new home so many times. He's never had that exciting pull of a new start, the feeling of decorating a nursery and planning for their expanding family. He'd never thought he'd be coming into their new home, alone, under circumstances such as these.

"I had Liam and the boys set up the beds for you." Peter says and Stiles bites his lip, struggling not to show any reaction. Things have been incredibly stilted between them.

As much as he should feel grateful, as much as Stiles knows Derek wouldn't want him to, he feels resentful. None of this would be happening if Peter hadn't dragged Derek into his life.

Dropping his large duffle bag on the floor, Stiles turns to face Peter. "Where's Dylan?"

"Scott's getting him from the car," Sure enough, Scott's coming up the path behind him, Dylan slumped over his shoulder. "He fell asleep on the ride over."

"Good, then Scott can stay with him." Stiles steps back outside, walking past Peter to the black Mercedes. "So I guess you're driving me then?"

Peter watches him warily, moonlight making his eyes silver. "Do you need to go somewhere?"

"The police station obviously."

“Derek wouldn’t--”

“Either you drive me or I drive myself.”

“I can’t let you go down there.”

“Let me? You don’t tell me where I can or can’t go.”

“Normally, I don’t.” The hand at his back leaves no room for argument. “But these aren’t normal circumstances. Get back into the house.”

The old fear of Peter resurfaces and Stiles does as he’s told. As he watches, Peter’s men filter into the room. They set down the remaining boxes they‘d been allowed to take from the apartment in the large foyer. When they’re done they fall in line, blocking the door.

“What the fuck?” Stiles sputters, “Are you out of your mind? I have to--”

“I have eyes on every exit. I’m doing this for your own good.” Peter’s voice is the same cold monotone it always is, and Stiles just wants to punch him in the face.. “With Derek gone, I take care of you. That’s how it works in the Family.”

“I‘m not part of your fucking family.” Stiles shoves at the man directly in front of the door hard and he doesn’t even budge. “ You’re really going to keep me prisoner?”

“As soon as Derek is arraigned and moved to county, I’ll take you to see him personally.”

With those last words, Peter leaves, his men remaining.

Rafael

It’s been incredibly hard for Rafael to act like he doesn’t know what’s going on, but when the media picks up the drug bust two days after he knows its happened, he no longer has to wait and feign ignorance.

A deep peace hits Rafael when he sees Derek’s face splashed across the news. He can finally admit how terrified he’s been for the past several months, if the

Hales had figured him out… Rafael shudders.

But the risk was worth the reward. What he's done, even if others look down on him for it, was for the best. With the type of history Derek has, Dylan and Stiles wouldn't be safe for long. No one can fault him for not allowing his family to be brought up in a world of violence and drugs; in the underbelly of organized crime.

As soon as the local news segment ends, Rafael tries calling Stiles on his cell but there's no response. That's to be expected. Rafe knows he's not in the condo, so that leaves the new house.

Before he gets in the car however, Rafael has an important call to make to John Stilinski. He needs to make sure John knows everything about Stiles' soon to be ex-husband; just in case Stiles' skimped on the details. John's making a trip soon and it would be good to slowly reel him onto his side.

By the time Rafael's walking to his car, he's whistling. John had reacted exactly as he' expected, a mix of concern and horror. This is the beginning of his and Stiles' fresh new start, this is where he truly can begin to make amends.

Derek

As Derek's led into the courtroom, he can't stop himself from looking around the sparsely populated room. In the front row, there's an older woman crying silently, bible clenched in her hands, and Derek would bet his life the mouthy kid who shared his cell for the past two days belongs to her. The couple behind the woman share her distraught but not her tears.

Peter's standing against the back wall, Liam next to him, green eyes reflecting memory of when he was in his place. It's a sorry excuse for a send off. Derek can remember how he'd felt then, helpless and angry as he watched his cousin be sentenced. Peter must've known that, and he'll forever be grateful that Stiles isn't in here to see this.

Judge Rector reads her decision after the lawyers brief statements without even a pause to deliberate. "Bail is denied and the prisoner Derek Hale is to be surrendered into the care of Newfield Correctional Facility pending trial."

It’s exactly what Derek expected, with a rap sheet as long as his, with the charges he’s currently facing-- all twenty seven federal and fourteen state-- Judge Rector would have to be insane to release him on bail. It doesn’t matter that her grandson owes Peter nearly fifty thousand.

It’s not his first time on the inside, but Derek can’t help but feel apprehension tingle down his spine. This isn’t what he’s conditioned for anymore, he’d made pink donuts for Dylan just two weeks ago, spent hours downloading arts and crafts ideas so they could gear up for ‘play school’. That kind of shit would be enough to get him gutted in jail. That Derek won’t survive more than ten minutes in the Penn.

The bailiff leads him back into the holding cell and Derek faces the concrete walls with resolve. He has to change, become someone he never wanted to be again.

Stiles

Stiles hangs up the phone, heart sinking as he hears about Derek’s denial of bail. Another thing to add to the shit storm, another thing to cry over that night, but for now he has to carry on as normal because as much as he’s torn up inside, Dylan needs him more than ever to remain a constant.

“Hi, Poppy.”

“Hey,” Stiles pastes a smile on his face when Dylan walks into the kitchen, automatically wiping at his damp cheeks. “You’re up early, pickle.”

Blue blanket trailing after him and froggie in hand, Dylan hops up unto his seat at the breakfast table. He’s still wearing his blue pajamas hair all messy bed head. “Hungry, so‘s froggie.”

“What do you two feel like eating?”

“Waffles.”

“Comin’ right up.” It takes awhile but Stiles finally finds the waffle iron inside one of the several boxes marked ‘kitchen’ in Derek’s neat scrawl. There are dozens of boxes still stacked against the wall, just waiting to be unpacked. He’s

exhausted just looking at them.
While Stiles cooks he flips on the The Lion King for Dylan to watch. It's all he wants to watch lately, and Stiles indulges him.

"Hurry." Dylan whines. "Froggie is gonna die soon."

"Alright, alright." Pressing a kiss to the top of his son's head, Stiles hands him his favorite plastic fork and fills his cup with fruit juice. "I'm finished."

However, Dylan's frown deepens when Stiles sets down the small plate of waffles in front of him. His own breakfast consist of dry toast and a glass of orange juice.

Breakfast is always a bleak reminder of Derek's absence. He'd make Stiles' favorites: omelet's, breakfast quiches, croissants; and for Dylan there'd be fruit loop pancakes, bacon and maple hash: anything Dylan's imagination dreamt up. They'd eat together happily, Derek rolling his eyes when Dylan would get over zealous in his efforts to feed himself, dropping food all over the floor and down his shirt.

God, Stiles misses that. The feeling of comfort, love and beautiful chaos.

"That's not how Daddy makes it."

The waffle mix is store bought, the eggs hastily scrambled. He hadn't had the energy to go to work much less the grocery so there's none of Derek's usually diced fruit and whipped cream.

"I know." Stiles sits down next to him and forces himself to eat because he has too. Every bite taste like ashes; he wonders what Derek's eating right now, if he's even eaten today and his stomach rebels. "Sorry, I know I don't make it like Daddy."

Dylan takes a half hearted bite, "When's he comin' back?"

"Soon."

Expression instantly going angry, Dylan throws his silverware down. "You said that yesterday!"

“Then…I don’t know.”

Dylan looks down at his lap, eyes overflowing. “Did he leave…forever?”

“C’mon,” Stiles sighs, lifting him up on his lap. “What’d I tell you? Daddy is coming back and he loves you very, very much. He told me just yesterday that he can‘t wait to give you a piggy back ride and set up your swing for you in the back.”

“You t-talk to him?”

“Of course, Pickle.” Stiles rocks him, “And when he comes back he’s going to want to see you smiling and happy.”

“Can I talk to Daddy too?”

“As soon as he calls.”

“Kay.”

“Lemme see a smile?”

Dylan looks up at him and gives a tiny one.

It’s not happy but it’s still the first he’s seen in days. So when the doorbell interrupts the moment, Stiles is annoyed. That annoyance doesn’t fade when he opens the door and Rafael barrels in and hugs him without warning.

Rafael

“I’ve been calling you!” The moment they hug, Rafael feels as if he can breathe again. This is all worth it; Stiles is worth it. “I was worried sick.”

Pushing him away firmly, Stiles steps back, eyes cloudy with confusion. “What are you doing here?”

“I came as soon as I saw!”

“Oh.” Stiles hugs his middle, steps aside to let him into the house before he shuts the door quickly behind them. “How’d you know?”

“It’s all over the news.” The dog’s crowding in on him, sniffing and butting her head on his leg. Rafe has always detested the mongrel. “Everyone’s talking about the bust.”

“People should shut up.” Stiles grabs Robin’s collar and pulls the dog into the living room with firm instructions to ‘stay‘. “I hate that about small towns.”

“How…” Rafael looks at him closely. He doesn’t like the pallor of his skin, the limp, greasy hair. “How’re you holding up?”

His concern earns him a glare, “Is this the part where you pretend to care?”

“Stiles…”

“I know what you’re thinking, that Derek’s a drug dealer, that it was only a matter of time--”

“I didn’t say anything.”

“But I can see it on your face!” Stiles snaps, movements agitated. “You’re wrong and so are they. He hasn’t been in the business for years. He gave all of that up for us, and our family.”

“Stiles,” Rafael begins cautiously, logically. “Listen to me, the reports say that the police found cocaine-”

“It wasn’t his.”

“Then how did it get there?”

“Fuck you!”

“I’m not trying to make your situation wore, Stiles, but I care about you and I care about our son. The fact is there were drugs in the house--”

“They weren’t his! He would’ve--”

“He would’ve what? Told you? Did you know about the wall safe? The guns?”

Stiles freezes and it’s clear he didn’t know.

“He didn’t tell you, did he?”

Averting his eyes, Stiles walks into the kitchen, begins to unpack a box. “It was for our protection.”

“Okay.” Rafael forces himself to not pursue the argument. He has to go slow. If he pushes too hard, too soon, he’ll lose everything he’s worked for. Stiles may not see it now, but he’s better off without Derek. “ If you believe in him, then I do too.”

“You do?” Stiles inhales sharply, mouth trembling. “T-Thank you.”

Cautiously, Rafael takes a step forward, arms raising when Stiles doesn’t move away. He pulls him close into a hug and is relieved when Stiles goes pliant against him. His chest aches when after a long moment of silence, Stiles’ begins to cry, harsh sobs that tear at his heart.

“I’ll take care of you.” Rafael whispers, holding on tighter. He can feel the soft curve of Stiles’ belly against his own and for a moment resentment rears his head. “I’ll take care of both of you.”

Stiles

The Newfield Correctional Facility is cold and concrete, the strip search humiliating and intrusive. When Stiles is finally led into the large room, he spots numerous tables, men in orange jumpsuits on the other side. It’s twenty minutes before he’s led forward and he catches his first glimpse of Derek in two weeks.

Derek looks older, leaner and he’s obviously been through more than one fight. His left eye is bruised purple and a deep green, stitching over his eyebrow. But what is most jarring is the orange jumpsuit, a cold reminder of what this place is.

Derek smiles when he sees him, scab on his lip pulling as he does. “Hey.”

“You’re hurt…?” Stiles’ throat tightens, hand instinctively reaching out to touch, “Who did this--”

“Keep your hands flat on the table.” A guard shouts from the wall, “Don’t make me remind you again.”

Stiles swallows hard, palms going to the cool table top.

“Little known secret,” Derek whispers loudly, “Don’t think Officer Mason over there likes me.”

“I’m glad you haven’t lost your sense of humor.”

“Never.” Derek replies, “I’m sorry you have to come down to a place like this.”

“At least it was a scenic drive.” Stiles looks up at him, he’d expected a lot of things today, all of the scenarios had been tense and fraught with hopelessness. “I uh…I was going to bring Dylan but Peter--”

“Peter was right.”

“You didn’t even let me finish.”

“You think I want Dylan to see me like this?” Derek lifts his wrist, thick chains on display. “Being arrested was enough.”

“I doesn’t matter.”

“It does to me, Stiles,” Derek’s eyes are glassy and it’s the first bit of emotion he’s shown. “I spoke with my attorney…and if I get indicted on half of these charges, worst case scenario, I’m looking at twenty five to life.”

“That’s- that’s, not.” The words catch in his throat, burn the back of his eyes. Stiles shakes his head in denial vehemently, “Peter will get you out of this; out of here.”

“And if he doesn’t?”

“He will.”

“You have to start thinking of the long term, think about taking care of yourself, Dylan and the new baby. ”

“How can you think about me at a time like this?”

“Because I love you, and when--” Derek catches himself, teeth worrying his bottom lip. “If I’m sentenced, you have to live your life.”

It’s all well meaning, poetic and it pisses Stiles off. “Shut the fuck up.”

Derek recoils, looking around at those near by who are casting them curious glances. “I’m trying to help you--”

“You’re trying to help yourself.” Stiles corrects, lowering his voice so only he can hear. “Derek…it’s okay to be scared, but don’t try and push us away just so you can freak the fuck out in private.”

“I’m not.” Derek insists. “Afraid, that is.”

“You don’t have to lie.”

“That’s exactly what I’m trying not to do. I’m afraid, but not for myself; for you. Who ever came after me, who ever did this, you’re out there alone with them and I can’t do shit.”

“Peter thinks you were the target all along.”

“He’s a smart man.” Derek looks down at the scarred oak table. “But I still want you to be careful.”

“I always am.”

“You like to think you are.” Derek jokes, foot knocking against Stiles’ under the table playfully. “How’re my babies doing?”

“Dylan’s okay, but he misses you like crazy.”

“And our littlest guy?”

“Just fine, I feel fine.” Stiles catches his breath, “I have my four month check up next week.”

“I know.”

“Did you still want me to find out the sex or..?”

For a moment Derek’s stony exterior cracks completely, and Stiles hurts with the pain he can see there. This pregnancy was meant to be different, they were supposed to do it together but once again, Stiles finds himself alone.

“Yeah…” Derek ducks his head. “Go ahead.”

“I’ll mail you the sonogram.”

“Thanks for coming, Stiles.”

Trying hard to remain strong for him, Stiles smiles brightly, “Anything for you,” He waits a beat and whispers. “Petunia.”

Scott

Summer is rapidly approaching, the air hot and dry with the promise of the usual oppressing heat. As he drives, Scott watches the people on the street shop at the farmer’s market, takes in the kids playing in the sprinklers in front of their yards.

Middle American paradise.

When they first moved here, Derek had scoffed at all the ‘asshole WASPS’ cutting their lawns at five p.m. and eating dinner at six; trudging off to their nine to fives daily. Even then, beneath the disdain, Scott had known that was the life Derek wanted, normal had been something he had always hoped for.

Glancing back at Sabrina sleeping in her car seat, Scott feels fear for the first time. What if Sabrina was forced to grow up without her father? There are some repercussions he’d never even considered. He really is the space cadet Derek accuses him of being.

Scott slows the car to a stop outside of Stiles' house. The garage door is open and he can see the moving boxes that had been delivered last week, just after Stiles went to Newfield.

"Let's try and cheer up your uncle." Scott tells Sabrina as he unfastens her car seat.

When Stiles answers the door, Scott quickly masks his reaction. He's lost weight and there are dark circles beneath his eyes. Scott curses his own stupidity, he knew they shouldn't have kept their distance, no matter how much Stiles had insisted.

"You look like shit." Scott greets. "This has to stop."

"Yeah, well." That seems to be the end of it. "Are you coming in or what?"

"What if Derek saw you right now? You need to eat better, you're pregnant."

"I'm eating fine."

"I keep telling him the same thing." Rafael says coming down the stairs with Dylan. "But he won't listen."

At the sight of Rafael, Scott pauses. He sure hasn't wasted any time. It's so damn convenient that the bastard inserts himself back into Stiles' life "I didn't know Stiles had company."

"I had to stay over, Stiles isn't taking care of himself and I wanted to help out."

Stiles huffs, picking up Dylan when he reaches for him. "As I keep telling the both of you, I'm perfectly fine."

"Well, I'm here now." Scott keeps his focus on Rafael, so the other man knows he's not wanted. "You can leave, Rafael."

Stiles frowns at the barely veiled hostility. "You don't have to be rude--"

"No, Stiles, it's alright." Rafael dips his head, reaches past Scott to get a bag from the closet. "He's right, you two have some talking to do. I'll see you

tonight, Stiles."

The moment the door closes behind him, Stiles sends Dylan into the living room and then rounds on Scott. It's obvious he's out for a fight. "Did you have to be so rude?"

"Yeah, I did. What did he mean by 'see you tonight'?" Scot retorts. "Derek's locked up in some fucking hole and this bastard is out free trying to take his place."

"He's my friend. Rafael has been nothing but supportive these past few weeks, and I'll have you know he believes that Derek's innocent."

"Yeah, shouldn't be too hard."

"What does that mean?"

"I mean I don't like how convenient this all is, and a lot of the guys are saying the same. Rafael shows up and Derek gets set up--"

"Rafael has been here for months--"

"And now he's in your house--"

"He's helping me unpack and fix the place up, my Dad is coming soon and I can't handle this on my own!"

"So lean on us, the people you know and trust--"

"You mean the same way Derek relied on you?"

Scott is speechless.

He's never seen Stiles this angry, and it's even more messed up that all that anger is directed at him.

"What is that supposed to mean?"

Stiles doesn't respond, just stares at him with an unreadable gaze.

Sabrina breaks the silence, crying as she begins to wake.

“You should calm her down.” Stiles says tonelessly. “I’m going to lay down, let yourself out.”

Stiles

The phone starts ringing just as Stile settles in to finish unpacking some of the smaller living room items. With each box he empties he feels like their dreams are dying, but he’s put this off long enough.

“Dyl?” Stiles sets a vase down on the built in shelf. “Wanna get that? Remember how we practiced.”

“Okay!” Dylan jumps off the couch so suddenly that Robin give a startled bark. He reaches up on his tip toes to get the phone off the end table. “Hello? Saminski- Haley house?”

“Stilinski Hale house.” Stiles corrects with a tiny smile. “Who is it?”

Dylan shrugs, brow furrowed adorably. “It’s a robot.”

Stiles takes the phone from him and catches the tail end of a collect call operator’s voice. Newfield, Stiles hears and his pulse quickens.

“Will you accept the charges?”

“Yes.” Stiles responds instantly sinks, fingers toying with the telephone cord until he hears the voice he’s been aching for.

Derek’s voice comes through the line and Stiles can feel the stress melt away. “Hey.”

“Derek.” An instant surge of happiness goes through him, pushes a smile to his lips. “Babe, how are you?”

“Good, I’m great, same old on this end. How’re you doing?”

“Better now.”

“Getting settled into the new house, okay?”

Stiles laughs tiredly, kicking his feet up on the table “Unpacking is a bitch without you.”

“You mean without me to do all the work.”

“Exactly.” Stiles closes his eyes, this is the longest they‘ve ever been apart. “You’re not getting into any more fights or--”

“I thought we agreed not to talk about prison shit.” Stiles can almost hear Derek’s exasperation. “Whatever happens on the inside, is left on the inside. I‘ll deal with it.”

“You can’t tell me not to worry--”

“Don’t; Liam left quite a legacy behind, not many wanna tangle with me.”

“And the ones that do?”

“They get laid the fuck out.”

There’s a hardness in Derek’s voice that Stiles has never heard before, a thread of steel that sends shivers down his spine.

“Put Dylan on, I’ve got two minutes left.”

“Okay,” Stiles pokes Dylan in the shoulder and the boy twists around in a huff. “Dylan?”

“What?”

“Guess who’s on the phone.”

“A robot.” Dylan repeats, turning back to the empty box he’d been playing in.

“Your Dad--”

“DADDY!” Dylan shouts delighted, ripping the phone from Stiles hand eagerly. “Daddy! Hi! Hi!”

For the next couple of minutes Stiles gets to watch his son laugh and talk animatedly in a way he hasn’t in a very long time. He’s talking so fast he’s tripping over his words, his giggles are contagious and Stiles lifts him up onto his lap to listen to his jumbled tales.

The silence in the wake of the call is crushing.

Peter

Change.

If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.

Peter’s brother had told him that once, years ago, just before he died. Those words have always stuck in his mind and now they’re replaying once more. That shit the pigs found wasn’t anything of his, he only dealt in Peruvian and he’d sure as hell notice Derek periodically stashing bricks.

Everything had been good, Derek had got out and he’d got the life he wanted. Peter didn’t understand it but he’d damn well protect it.

The only thing that had changed in their lives were the people.

Isaac, Jackson and Rafael all had arrived at the same time.

Isaac’s the first name Peter dismisses, the kid’s done way too much illegal shit and he’s been kept under tight surveillance, the only way he’d be able to communicate with the Feds would be through astral projection.

That left Jackson, a snot nosed bitch who would love to fuck them all over just because he was bored. And Rafael, an unknown.

With Jackson Peter has history, he knows what to expect from him and it wouldn’t be the first time he fucked them over, but never like this. Jackson is like a hornet, he stings but he doesn’t intend to do any real damage.

Jackson is too obvious; change the way you look at things.

The pieces slot into place, fragments of conversations he's had with Derek. Rafe has been around Stiles, contact steadily increasing. He's taken them out on his own and he's been in the house. Alone. The truth strikes like lightning and Peter storms out of his bedroom only to nearly mow Scott down.

Scott steadies himself, "Where are you off to in such a hurry?"

"Out." There's never been a need to explain things to Scott. "She ready for bed?"

"Just about." Sabrina blinks slowly, eyes sliding half mast, but it's clear his daughter is fighting the sandman. "Where are you going?"

"Are you going to be one of those nagging wives?"

"Fuck you, Peter, don't make me ask a third time."

"To clean house."

"What does that even mean?"

"We have a rodent problem."

Scott meets his gaze solemnly, "Rafe."

"So you agree?"

"I agree that it'd be one hell of a coincidence if Derek's arrest didn't have something to do with his sudden change of heart and arrival in town. What are we going to do?"

"I am going to take care of it." Peter says pointedly, already reaching for his wallet and phone. "You stay with Rina."

"I'm coming with you." Surprisingly, for the first time Scott doesn't fall in line, rises defiant, eyes crackling with a rage that matches Peter's. "Derek is my best friend."

“I can’t--”

“You don’t control me.” Scott pulls open the night stand drawer and Peter is taken aback to see the .45 held in his hand with an ease that is only acquired from years of use. “I’m going with you.”

Derek

“Hale.” The prison guard raps his night stick against the metal rails. “You’ve got mail.”

Derek jumps down from his bunk and takes the package, smiling internally when he sees Stiles’ deranged cramp scrawl. “Thanks.”

“No problem.”

Always a nosey prick, Josh crowds in behind him. “What’s inside? Love letters from your sweetheart?”

“Fuck off,” Derek swats the kid on the back of the head. Josh is one of Liam’s friends, Derek had known him before he got locked up. It’s probably not a coincidence they’re bunked together. “Mind your own business.”

“Hey,” Josh pints down at the black and white sonogram photo. “That your kid?”

“Yeah.” This one is much clearer than the first, Derek can see the curve of his kid's stomach, it’s head and even lips. “One of two.”

“So people weren’t bullshitting about you being a regular Bill Cosby now.”

Derek rolls his eyes and climbs up to his bunk to get some privacy. There are two other pictures beneath the sonogram. The first is of Dylan and Robin, Dylan clearly struggling to climb unto the long suffering Mastiff’s back. His hair’s a little longer, falling into his eyes and Derek thinks he may have grown some. It’s only been a month but it feels like a lifetime.

The second picture makes Derek smile even as his eyes sting. It’s of Stiles and it’s taken in the new house, as he stands in front of the hallway mirror. His shirt

is pulled up under his pecs, enough to show his bare stomach. Derek traces the growing curve with his finger tip, another piece of his life passing him by.

Derek's not an idiot. He can put two and two together and make four, he'd suspected before Peter had even come to him. There was only one person who wanted him out of the way, and it was Rafael.

For now, Derek will remain patient, fake obliviousness because it's the only way Peter's plan will work, and he has to trust him. With so many eyes on them, with Rafael possibly being a government informant, it's all too delicate.

"I'll be out soon." Derek thinks as he looks at the photographs. "Don't worry."

Stiles

Stiles is dreaming and he's happy because Derek is there, in their home, in his bed, arms around him. He doesn't want to wake because Derek is smiling, sunlight turning his eyes to liquid gold and lashes halo.

"You're getting so big." Derek whispers against his neck, lips warm and palm even warmer over his belly. "You look so beautiful."

Derek's arms get tighter, tight enough to hurt, and the bright colors fade to grey. Suddenly he's alone , but the oppressing presence is still there.

Unexpectedly, pain tears him out of sleep.

The muscles in his stomach feel stretched too tight, and Stiles is afraid to even breathe. Fumbling in the darkness, he grabs his phone, cramping even more as he does.

"911 Emergency, how can I help you?"

Gasping for breath, Stiles tries to focus through the pain, legs drawing up to his middle as the cramps rip through his abdomen. "I'm miscarrying."

Rafael

Stiles is pale beneath the white hospital blanket, eyes red rimmed and swollen.

Both of his hands are over his stomach, where the small curve is still visible.

Disappointment makes him falter, as much as Rafael doesn't want him to suffer, he'd still hoped.

"Rafe," Stiles' voice is hoarse. "Thank you for coming."

"I jumped in the car as soon as I got your message." Trying not to show how emotional he is, Rafael comes over to Stiles' bedside, takes one of his cold hands between his. Dylan is sleeping in the empty hospital bed next to him. "Are you alright? Any news?"

"I didn't know who else to call, and with Dylan --"

"You can always call me." Rafe tells him, "You know that."

Tears cloud his eyes, "It was so horrible."

Rafael's pulse rushes in his ears. "Then you…you lost the baby?"

For one long beat Rafael thinks it's true. He wishes he could be strong enough to raise another man's child because losing this baby would hurt Stiles' deeply but he knows he can't

"Stiles?"

Rubbing at his eyes, Stiles shakes his head. "I nearly did."

"Nearly?"

"I'm going to be placed on bed rest for the next two weeks, but Dr. Hedrick thinks she'll be fine."

"She…?"

"It's a girl," Stiles smiles, tired but clearly happy. "I heard the nurses talking outside. I didn't…I didn't want to find out without Derek."

"A girl." Rafael repeats, hollowly. This is the way he felt when the feds

contacted him in his cell; cornered. “Derek’s daughter.”

“He wanted a girl.” Stiles mistakes his words for enthusiasm or interest. “He’s going to be so happy.”

“Mr. Hale?” The buzzer on Stiles’ bedside goes off and a nurses voice filters through, “You have a visitor.”

Stiles sighs, “I’m not feeling up to any.”

“It’s someone named John Stilinski, “ The nurse continues. “He’s claiming to be your father.”